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Eastern District of California

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VALLEJO GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 11 YEARS FOR METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that DAVID MICHAEL CAPENHURST, 26, of Vallejo, Calif., was sentenced today by United States District Judge John A. Mendez to 11 years and three months in federal prison followed by five years of federal supervised release. CAPENHURST pleaded guilty to distributing methamphetamine in violation of federal law on October 21, 2008.

This case is the product of a joint investigation of the Vallejo Police Department, the Solano County District Attorney's Office, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Jason Hitt, who prosecuted the case, CAPENHURST admitted in his guilty plea that on March 28, 2008, he offered to sell a highly pure form of crystal methamphetamine. Shortly after the drug deal was arranged, detectives stopped CAPENHURST's vehicle for a series of vehicle code violations. During a search of the vehicle, Vallejo detectives located a small amount of marijuana and \$1,050.00 in center compartment of the car. A drug-trained canine alerted to the presence of additional narcotics, and detectives pried open an area in the passenger's side designed to house an airbag. There, detectives discovered a hidden compartment containing approximately 9½ ounces of crystal methamphetamine in four separate, clear-plastic knotted bags (worth an estimated street value of approximately \$13,500). The hidden compartment also contained a digital scale and a loaded 9 mm semiautomatic pistol that had been reported stolen.

At the sentencing hearing, Judge Mendez said he hoped the severity of the sentence for drug trafficking and firearm possession would serve as a lesson to CAPENHURST for committing such a serious offense. Judge Mendez also cited the sophistication of his drug trafficking activity and his validated membership in a Norteño street gang as factors warranting a severe sentence.

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